Andover News.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 17, 1890.

A Joke that Was Played on the Genial Actor.

"While poker is considered a national game I must confess," said Billy Florence, the actor, "that I have seen it played chiefly in an international way, i. e., on board British steamships carrying American passengers. I only play cards enroute to Europe to pass away time—nothing else, and then I do not gamble. Once, some years ago, I was playing a theatrical engagement in Louisville, Ky., and I was invited to visit and participate in a late supper after the performance was over. Among those who were to be at a supper was Henry Watterson. The theatrical performance was very long and it was near midnight when I reached the bachelor apartments. I had no sooner arrived than I noticed some little excitement among the gentlemen present. It seems that a game of draw had ended and a count was being made of moneys. I had no alternative but to wait developments, and they came soon enough. A big dispute arose across the table, and in an instant Watterson was on his feet, pistol in hand, and trying to aim at his antagonist, a well-known gentleman. I knew that blood was going to be shed right there, so I jumped up and threw my arms around the editor. Others caught his arm and kept it up so if the pistol were discharged it would only damage the ceiling. The other gentleman was ferocious and, although he was held by strong men, I thought he would break loose every second and fire right into us. Great beads of perspiration stood ont upon my forehead. I pleaded with the Kentuckian not to shoot; that he would regret it. The more I pleaded and tried to keep his pistol arm up the more he attempted to break away. Every instant I expected to hear the crack, crack of revolvers and to see the reeling form of a man perforated with a large bullet. I pictured the direful consequences and the blame. The latter would partially, at least, rest upon me, because I was the guest of the evening and the gathering was in my honor. In our struggle to keep the two men apart tables were overturned, chairs were knocked down and the money on the table somehow disappeared like magic. Finally I caught Watterson's pistol in my hand; and then the lamentable truth flashed like an electric shock through me, to-wit: I was being grieved and the whole fight was concocted to fool me. The pistol was nothing but a bootjack, one that is small and when folded resembles the shape of a pistol. I was completely taken in, and I need scarcely say that the 'smiles' were on me. That was the most exciting game of poker that I ever indulged in."

Knew He Was Right.

Farmer Jenks is a man who is so desirous of being considered infallible that he will suffer great inconvenience rather than relinquish that claim. "He'd ruther have his own way than eat when he's hungry," says his wife, who, after long years of contention and final yielding, has learned to know him well.

Not long ago Farmer Jenks injured one of his fingers so severely that he was obliged to leave his work and go home to have it dressed.

"I tell you what, Jane," said he to his wife, "that finger'll have to come off."

"No, 'twon't, either, father," said she, soothingly. "I've seen plenty of hurts worse 'n that."

"Jane, I tell you 'twill! Don't you s'pose that I know what to expect of my own finger?"

The dispute ran high, and as usual the husband had the last word.

Days went on, and the finger grew worse rather than better, until at last it reached such a state that the doctor was called. He had not been in the room fifteen minutes when Farmer Jenks summoned his wife.

"Jane," said he, "come here, come right here! What do you s'pose he says?"

"Well, I guess by the way you're smilin' he says it's all right," said she, also beginning to smile, in relief. "I must say I am glad! Your forefinger and on the right hand! It didn't seem to me I could be reconciled if it really had to come off—"

"But that's just it," interrupted her husband, smiling in triumph, and looking at her with sparkling eyes. "It's got to come off, and I told you so!"

During his lecture tour in the United States Stanley will be carried from city to city in a splendid palace car now being built for that express purpose. Flying over the country in this luxurious way is a somewat different mode of traveling from plodding wearily on foot through the dismal jungles and over the rugged steeps of Central Africa. Stanley will easily recognize the difference and undoubtedly contrast the comforts and luxuries of modern railroad travel with his painful journeyings in the dark continent. It is to the latter, however, that he owes his world wide fame. It is not recorded anywhere that any one while traveling in a palace car has ever extended the science of geography or opened up a new continent to the commerce and civilization of the rest of the world.

A LITTLE FURTHER ON.

The things we've sought for all these years,
The phantoms we have chased, the pow'rs
That hidden lie, the gilt ring gold,
The things we've sighed for shall be ours
A little further on.

The gods shall smile on us and come
To lay their trophies at our feet,
And after all our vain attempts,
The joys we've sought so long we'll meet
A little further on.

The cherished hopes of by-gone years,
The castles reared high in the air,
The long-lost friends we too shall meet.
And rest in peace from toil and care
A little further on.

—[Burt Fowles, in Texas Siftings.

MOMENTOUS MAGIC.

BY WM. A. CALDWELL.

Bloomingburg was all in a ferment. Charley Clymer said it was a bloomingburg of blooming idiots; but then he had gone there to sell goods and was wrathy because nobody would talk business to him. It seems that a sleight-of-hand performer had struck the town and everybody was discussing his wonderful feats. As soon as Clymer appeared in a store with his sample cases he immediately became the target for a running fire of problems in the black art: how could a man tear up your silk hat right in front of your eyes and then produce the same hat undamaged from a cask which he had just shown you was empty? how could he conjure a rabbit into a bottle? and so on. Clymer was generally interested in such things and it was confidently expected that he would throw some light on the subject, but he didn't. He only imparted his opinions of fakirs and jugglers in general in a vigorous style of English that grew steadily less and less placid as it became necessary for him to repeat it wherever he went.

Clymer left a knot of his former patrons solemnly discussing the cabinet trick, and walked down the street towards Halpert's store.

"If I can't make a sale to Halpert, I may as well leave the town. Halpert's got more sense than anybody else here anyway, and if he's got the fever, then it must be epidemic, and I'd better clear out or I'll catch it myself."

This last remark was grim humor on Clymer's part—as if he could catch anything that would divert his thoughts from a certain little note in his breast pocket which had reached him a day or two before he had left the city, and which had been instrumental in keeping him awake o'nights and worried by day ever since. He stopped now in the shade of a tree, put down his sample cases, wiped his face, took out the note to ponder it again; here is what he read:

Dear Charley—It almost breaks my heart to write as I must. It is to tell you that our acquaintance must cease. I cannot give any explanation, but believe me it has cost me a hard struggle to write this. I can only say forget me. I can never forget you.

AMY.

There was one place in the note where the words "Ed says" had been written and then erased, but Charley's jealous eyes had made them out at the first reading.

"Who in thunder's Ed, I wonder?" he muttered to himself now, and not for the first time.

Miss Amy Layton had come some three months previously to Mrs. Walton's boarding-house where Clymer stopped while in the city. His voluble landlady had spoken in high praise of her new boarder to Clymer, and gave him to understand that she had come from a very aristocratic family which had been broken up by the failure and death of the father. Clymer needed no praise of the young lady after he once met her. The neat trim figure and gentle manners played havoc with his heart at once. He had made love desperately to Amy since she had been at Mrs. Walton's, and she had received his advances kindly, so he had been correspondingly depressed since the receipt of the above note, which he found awaiting him on his return to the city from his previous trip. Mrs. Walton sympathized heartily with the young lover, who couldn't dissemble in this matter so successfully as he could in business; in fact, he made no attempt to conceal his distress.

"All I know," said his landlady, "is that she settled with me up to Saturday night, and said that she was going out of the city. Perhaps Mrs. Bolton could give you some intelligence of her; she brought Miss Layton here in the first place, you know."

Clymer went to the elegant residence of Mrs. Bolton, but that lady had gone south, and the date of her return was uncertain. He moped about the city for a day or two and finally started out on the road again with the hope of finding relief by strict attention to business. Bloomingburg was one of the first towns he stopped at, and he was disgusted to find it in the demoralized state described above. When he entered the emporium of the amiable Halpert, he detected that worthy sitting on a chair with his chin in his hands, his elbows resting on his knees, and his eyes fixed upon the floor with a strong glare.

"Got' em again, old man?" inquired Clymer, making a feeble effort to be jovial.

Halpert looked up.

"Hello, Glymer," he replied. "Vy, I dell you, I vos yust thinkin' o' dot magic feller."

"That'll do! That'll do!" said Clymer, wearily, as he banged his cases down on the counter and perched himself on a stool. "I haven't heard of anything except that blamed mountebank since I got here. Can't you talk business a while, just for a change?"

"Dot's all ride," responded the placid Halpert, "but yust vait a leetle. I didn't use to dake no shtock in dricks myself, boot last nide some frieuts dook me ofer to dot show, unt I dell you it vas great! Of course it was dricks; boot how does he do 'em? how does he do 'em?"

"I don't know how he does 'em, and I don't care. I am disappointed in you, Halpert; I am, for a fact. I said on the way down here, if there's anybody in the place that's got a grain of sense left, Halpert's the man; and here you are, as loney as the rest of 'em."

"Now, dere's dot gabinet," went on the stolid Halpert. "He leds you examine it unt shuts it oop, and ride avay, shlam, bang, pop, goes dem bells unt dings. Of course, I know it vas dot seester of his vat makes der ragget—boot how does she *get* in dot gabinet? *How* does she get in? Now he says to-nide he vood die a man in dot gabinet, unt shtill dem berformances vood go on, yust der same. Dere goes dot seester now; she ain't no pad-lookin' gal, is she?"

Clymer turned his eyes listlessly toward the door. The next instant he nearly paralyzed the phlegmatic Halpert by tumbling off the stool and rushing towards the door. When he reached the sidewalk, however, the object of his search had disappeared and he came slowly back to his old perch.

"You said he would let a man be in that cabinet to-night, didn't yon?"

"Yass, dot's vot he said."

"Guess I'll drop in and see it. You fellows can't talk about anything else, anyhow."

"Yust vait dill you see him once." retorted the complacent Halpert, satisfied that it was his graphic description of the show that had won Clymer over.

That night Bloomingburg's Grand Opera House was packed to the walls. The performance was a good one, unquestionably; most of the illusions were new even to Clymer, and the deftness of the young magician was really marvelous. If Clymer had been in his normal condition he would have taken a deep interest in the exhibition. Finally the shifted scenes showed the stage set for the concluding part of the programme—the cabinet act. When the professor requested the aid of some well-known gentleman in the audience, Halpert suggested the name of Clymer which was speedily caught up by others. He accordingly went forward and took his place on the stage. The professor then took the two doors of the front of the cabinet and leaned them against the wall. He then "called the gentlemen's particular attention" to the fact that there was no possible communication with the cabinet from below nor from the wall behind. For the edification of the audience he turned the cabinet round on its rollers, in order that they might see that there was no door in the back. After having returned it to its former position and replaced the doors, he put a chair, a tambourine and some bells in the cabinet.

"It will be necessary to blindfold the gentleman and tie his hands," he explained, blandly.

Clymer made no objection. Seating himself in the chair, he placed his hands in readiness for the cords, only taking care to close his fists tightly and thus swell his wrists as much as possible. A silk handkerchief was then tied over his eyes, and after a few remarks by the professor the door was slammed shut. Clymer immediately devoted himself to the task of slipping his hands out of the cords. This was no easy thing to do, and the bells and tambourine had been going for a minute or two before he finally got free and pushed the handkerchief up from his eyes. One glance at the materialized spirit before him satisfied him, and stepping to her side he put his arm around her waist and said:

"Amy, why did you leave me?"

The being in his arms gave a slight scream and dropped the bells on the stage as she jerked her hands back into the cabinet. If the audience hadn't been devoting themselves so vigorously to applause over the supposed discomfiture of Clymer, the professor might have gotten some inkling that his spirit was in trouble, but as it was he only knew that the dropping of those bells was the signal for opening the doors of the cabinet, and this he proceeded to do at once, swinging them back to their full width and stepping aside so that the view of all the auditorium might be unobstructed. The gaping spectators took one breathless look, and then broke into vociferous acclamation again. They thought they understood the situation. Clymer had found out how the trick was done, and was going to expose it. However, he did not appear to be altogether satisfied with the result. He relaxed his hold of Amy and she stepped from the cabinet and slipped out of sight among the scenes, whispering a word to the frowning professor on the way. Clymer went forward to the footlights and made his first effort at oration, amid an impressive silence:

"Ladies and gentlemen, I feel that I ought to offer a word or two of explanation. The young lady who has just left the stage is not a stranger to me. I had hoped, until recently, that she would some day consent to be my wife. I was very much surprised to find her here. I did not intend—she wasn't—wouldn't—" The indulgent audience kindly helped the stammerer out by a brief burst of applause; as it subsided, the stentorian voice of Halpert was heard:

"Dot's all ride, Glymer, boot how did she get in dot gabinet?"

"How did she get in there?" repeated Clymer, vaguely, as if that had nothing to do with it. "I don't know how she got in there."

The audience made no attempt to conceal its disgust. The professor was all smiles once more, and with a profound bow gave the signal for dropping the curtain. Clymer at once hunted up Amy, whom he found in tears, but not disposed to be at all frigid toward him. In reply to his questions she said:

"It was all Ed's fault. His assistant lately met with an accident of so serious a nature that it finally caused his death. Ed is so jealous of his tricks and mysteries that he was afraid to employ a new assistant, and he begged me to come and help him. He said it would not be necessary for me to appear before the audience at all, but simply to hand him apparatus from behind the scenes, and as that way down here, it there's anybody in the place that's got a grain of sense left, Halpert's the man; and here you are, as loney as the rest of 'em."

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GREAT BIG PEOPLE.

GIANTS WHO HAVE EXCITED THE WORLD'S CURIOSITY.

The Part Large Men and Women Have Played as Court Favorites.

Dwarf in a Giant's Pocket.

Giants are rare, although showmen say that such as pose in the various museums are plentiful and their pay is small.

An extraordinary man or woman has always been a curiosity.

At all times and in all countries, and in the Irish Times, kings and nobles had a fancy for including among their retainers either a giant or a dwarf, sometimes both. Frederick the Great had his corps de gigantic grenadiers; and in the Tower of London may be seen a lance and some enormous armor of sixteenth century work which doubtless belonged to some giant knight or trooper of the King's bodyguard.

James I. had attached to his person a porter named Walter Parsons, commonly called the Staffordshire giant, a handsome, brave and strong young man, who had begun life as a farrier. His height was 7 feet 7 inches, and his portrait artists, engraved by Glover. Parsons lived on into the reign of Charles I., and was succeeded by another giant, William Evans, two inches taller than his predecessor.

It is a curious fact that the population of France has rarely produced a giant. Great Britain, Germany, Poland and Switzerland carry off the palm; and this may perhaps be attributed to the prevalence in France of a vegetarian diet, which does not tend to develop the muscle as does the stronger diet of meat. The eighteenth century, to judge by contemporary letters and newspapers, seems to have been more than usually prolific in giants and giantesses.

Horace Walpole mentions a giant and giantess who were on view respectively at Spring Gardens and Half-Moon Court, Ludgate Hill. They were both, it seems, handsome and well proportioned persons, and without the usual ungainliness peculiar to their kind. At this time also appeared a young Italian giantess seven feet in height, "who was the admiration," said the hand-bills, "of the Emperor of Germany, of eight kings of Europe and of the grand Czar of Moscow himself."

Her appearance seems to have been followed in 1742 by that of Cajanus, the famous Swedish giant, commonly called the "living colossus," who came over to England and established himself at a house opposite the Mansion House. He was a son of a pastor of a little village in Finland, and stood 8 feet 4 inches in his socks.

In 1755 London was visited by another Italian giant, named Bernardo Gigli, or Gilli, who measured 8 feet in height, and seems to have created an immense sensation by the colossal proportions of his limbs.

But no giant ever created such a furor as did Charles Byrne, the Irish giant, who was 8 feet 8 inches in height, and possessed of enormous strength. He was clever and shrewd and full of the natural wit of his mother country; but unfortunately the large fortune he rapidly gained by the exhibition of himself led him into habits of gluttony and intemperance, and he died at the early age of twenty-two, leaving instructions that his body was to be buried at sea; but the College of Surgeons in some way obtained his corpse for the sum of £800, according to certain reports, and the skeleton was "set up" in their museum by William Hunter, the famous anatomist.

Shortly after Byrne's death another Irish giant exhibited himself in London, by name Patrick Cotter, alias O'Brien. He was so attenuated that, tall as he was, he appeared even taller. His height was 8 feet 7 inches. Feeble and debilitated in health, he could only walk by supporting himself on the shoulders of two tall men walking in front of him, resting a hand on the shoulder of each. Many amusing stories are related of him. One evening, at a Masonic dinner, he took out of his pocket the celebrated dwarf, Count Berulauski, and set him upon the table, to the astonishment of all.

Some time after, while staying at Bath, he nearly terrified a night-watchman out of his wits by taking off the top of a street-lamp and lighting his pipe with the flame.

He was of an amiable and gentle disposition, but not remarkable for any intellectual capacity. Since his day no the present time London has only seen four giants of any abnormal height or size, namely, James Toles, 8 feet 4 inches in height, in 1819; Scott, Chang and Her Wickelmeir, the Bavarian giant.

Of giantesses, Miss Scott and Pauline Marie Elizabeth Wedde are the only colossal ladies who have astonished the eyes of the sight-seeing world. The latter, called the Queen of the Amazons, was born at Ben-Rendorf, in Thuringia, on the 31st of January, 1866, and introduced to the London public at the Alhambra in a piece entitled "Babil and Bijou." She was good looking and of a handsome, well-proportioned figure and measured about 8 feet 4 inches in height.

When Plants are Thirstiest.

The other day a gentleman saw a professional florist watering his plants in the hot sun, and in a surprised tone inquired if that wouldn't injure the plants. "Why no," was the answer. "Why not, now?" "I supposed they had to be watered only at night," said the amateur. "Do you drink only at night?" asked the florist. "Are you only thirsty when the sun goes down? That idea helps our business, for under it the flowers of the ignorant would-be growers die, and we get the opportunity of selling more of our stock. I water my flowers when they are thirsty, just as a stock-grower waters his stock."

—[New York Tribune.

Selfish People.

The most disagreeable people in the world are selfish people.

The most unhappy people are selfish people.

The most unfortunate people are selfish people.

The most unreasonable people are selfish people.

The most dangerous people are selfish people.

The most needy people are selfish people. [The Ram's Horn.

American Fables.

THE PEASANT AND THE CROW.

One cold day in the Fall a Peasant who was laboring in his Field discovered a Crow who was almost dead with Hunger, and who Piteously asked for Corn.

"Ah! but I have nothing to give," replied the Peasant, "and the Crows are to blame for it. Last Spring, when I Planted my corn you Persisted in digging up the seed. Each kernel you then ate would have given you a hundred this fall, but you refused to wait. You not only Robbed me of my Crop, but cut off your own Food supply as well."

Moral—Neighbors have to borrow now and then, but don't borrow the crowbar, piano, hired girl, horse and buggy, flat-irons, front-door bell, sugar-box, tea-canister and sideboard all at once.

THE CHAP WHO MISSED IT.

A Beggar, who was making his way along a Lonely Highway in the Evening, was stopped by a Foot-Pad, who Demanded his Wealth. The Beggar soon gave him a true Understanding of how Matters stood, and the Foot-Pad cried out in his Sorrow:

"Alas! but I have been Defrauded of my Rights!"

"How so?"

"Why, the Traveler with a Fat Purse whom I expected to Pass this way must have taken Another Route, and will now be Robbed by Someone else!"

Moral—There's something funny in hearing the Coal Man call the Ice Man an Extortioner.

THE TRAMP AND THE LADY.

A Tramp having called at a house and stated the Fact of his Hunger and Distress, the good Lady prepared him a Noble Feast, and when he had Finished He Stole the Ax and Buck-saw and was making off, when she cried out at his Ingratitude.

"Ah! Madam, you do not know what you say," he replied. "I did intend to steal the Piano, but, overcome with your kindness, I have contented myself with these poor Tools."

Moral—She Apologized, of course.

THE DOG AND THE SAGE.

A Dog was Barking at the Moon, when a Sage inquired why he did so, adding that he could not Possibly affect the great Luminary one way or the other, and that it seemed a Useless Waste of Energy.

"Oh, it isn't that it makes any difference with the Moon," replied the canine, "but I want the Other Dogs in this Neighborhood to Know that I'm not Dead."

Moral—We never Know that some men have been Buried until after we Miss their Bluster.—[Detroit Free Press.

SUNDAY'S SERMON.

ONE OF REV. DR. TALMAGE'S STARTLING DISCOURSES.

Subject: "The Wings of Love."

TEXT: "The Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust." Ruth ii. 12.

Scene—An Oriental harvest field. Grain standing. Grain in swaths. Grain in sheaves.

At the side of the field a white tent in which to take the nooning, jars of vinegar or of sour wine to quench the thirst of the hot working people. Swarthy men striking their sickles into the rustling barley. Others twisting the bands for the sheaves, putting one end of the band under the arm, and with the free arm and foot collecting the sheaf. Sunburned women picking up the stray straws and bringing them to the binders. Boaz, a fine looking Oriental, gray bearded and bright faced, the owner of the field, looking on, and estimating the value of the grain by the acre, and calculating so many ephahs to the acre, and with his large, sympathetic heart pitying the overtasked workmen and the women, with white faces enough to faint, in the hot noonday sun. But there is one woman who especially attracts the man's attention. She has feathers and all is peace. So, sometimes, God leaves us. He goes off to get bread for our soul, and then He comes back after a while to the nest and says, "Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it," and He drops into it the sweet promise of His grace, and the love of God is shed abroad and we are under His wings—the broad wings of the Almighty.

Yes, they are very broad! There is room under those wings for the salvation of hundred millions of the race. You say: "Do not get the invitation too large, for there is nothing more awkward than to have more guests than accommodations." I know it. The seamen's friend society is inviting all the sailors. The tract society is inviting all the destitute. The Sabbath-schools are inviting all the children. The missionary society is inviting all the heathen. The printing presses of the Bible societies are going night and day, doing nothing but printing invitations to this great gospel banquet. And are you not afraid that there will be more guests than accommodations? No! All who have been invited will not half fill up the table of God's supply. There are chairs for more. There are cups for more. God could with one feather of His wing cover up all those who have come, and when He spreads out both wings they cover all the earth and all the heavens.

Ye Israelites, who went through the Red Sea, come under! Ye multitudes who have gone into glory for the last six thousand years, come under! Ye hundred and forty-four thousand, and the thousands of thousands, come under! Ye flying cherubim and archangel, fold your pinions, and come under! And yet there is room! Ay! If God would have all the space under the wings occupied he must make other worlds, and people them with other myriads, and have other resurrection and judgment days, yea, broader than all space, broader than thought, wide as eternity, from tip to tip, are the wings of the Almighty! Oh! under such provisions as that are we not rejoiced? Come under, ye wandering, ye weary, ye troubled, ye sinning, ye dying souls! Come under the wings of the Almighty. Whosoever will let him come. Though your sins be never so over wrecked, however abandoned, however woe bagone, there is room enough under the wings—under the broad wings of the Almighty! Oh, what a gospel! so glorious, so magnificent in its provision! I love to preach it. It is my life to preach it. It is my heaven to preach it.

I remark, further, that the wings under which Ruth came to trust were strong wings. The strength of a bird's wing—of a sea fowl's wing for example—you might guess it from the fact that sometimes for five, six or seven days it seems to fly without resting. There have been condors in the Andes that could overcome an ox or a stag. There have been eagles that have picked up children and swung them to the top of the cliffs. The flap of one eagle's wing will deal death in everything it strikes. There are birds whose wings are packed with strength to fly, to lift, to destroy. So the wings of God are strong wings. Mighty to save. Mighty to destroy. I preach Him—"the Lord, strong and mighty; the Lord, mighty in battle!" He flapped His wing, and the antediluvian world was gone. He flapped His wing, and Babylon perished. He flapped His wing, and Herculaneum was buried. He flapped His wing, and the Napoleonic dynasty ceased.

Before the stroke of that pinion a fleet is nothing. An army is nothing. An empire is nothing. A world is nothing. The universe is nothing. King—eternal, omnipotent—He asks no counsel from the thrones of heaven. He takes not the archangel into His cabinet. He wants none to draw His chariots, for they are the winds. None to load His batteries, for they are the lightnings. None to tie the sandals of His feet, for they are the clouds. Mighty to save. Our enemies may be strong, our sorrows violent, our sins may be great. But quicker than an eagle ever hurled from the crag a hawk or raven will the Lord strike back our sins and our temptations if they assault us when we are once seated on the eternal rock of His salvation. What a blessed shelter! Ye who are fended by the strong wing of the Almighty! Stronger than the pelican's wing, stronger than the albatross' wing, stronger than the condor's wing are the wings of the Almighty.

I have, in my meditations, to prove that the wings under which Ruth came to trust were gentle wings. There is nothing softer than a feather. You have noticed when a bird returns from flight how gently it stoops over the nest. The young birds are not afraid of having their lives trampled out by the mother bird; the old whippoor-will drops into its nest of leaves, the oriole into its casket of bark, the humming bird into its hammock of moss—gentle as the light. And so, says the psalmist, He shall cover thee with His wing. Oh, the gentleness of God! But even that figure does not fully set forth; for I have sometimes looked into the bird's nest and seen a dead bird—its life having been trampled out by the mother bird. But no one that ever came under the feathers of the Almighty was trodden on.

Blessed nest! warm nest! Why will men stay out in the cold to be shot of Acmpadite and to be chilled by the blast where there is divine shelter? More beautiful than any flower I ever saw are the hues of a bird's plumage. Did you ever examine the Blackbird, coating like a flake of darkness through the sunlight; the meadow lark, with head of fawn and throat of velvet and breast of gold; the red flamingo, flying over the southern swamps like sparks from the forge of the setting sun; the pelican, white and black—morning and night tangled in its wings—give but a faint idea of the beauty that comes down upon the soul when on it is the feathers of the Almighty.

Here fold your wings, ye birds! This is the only safe nest. Every other nest will be destroyed. The prophet says so: "Though thou exalt thyself like the eagle, and set thy nest among the stars, yet will I bring thee down, saith the Lord of Hosts." Under the swift wings, under the broad wings, under the strong wings, under the gentle wings of the Almighty find shelter until these Salamities are overpast. Then when you want to change nests it will only be from the valley of earth to the heights of heaven; and instead of "the wings of a dove," for which David longed, not knowing that in the turtle, and the chief sight they would give out, you will be conducted upward by the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings Ruth, the beautiful Moabitess, came to trust.

God forbid that in this matter of eternal weal or woe we should be more stupid than the fowls of heaven, "for the stork knoweth her appointed time, and the turtle, and the crane, and the swallow observe the time of their going; but my people know not the judgments of the Lord."

ALEXANDER H. STEPHENS' ROMANCE.

A Georgia Woman's Story of Why the Southern Statesman Never Married.

There was always much speculation during the life of Alexander H. Stephens why he never married; nor did this speculation cease after he had gone to the grave a celibate. Johnston & Brown's "History of Alexander H. Stephens" gives one version and the *Morning News*, upon the authority of the lady interested, gives another version, but as to which is the best founded, or whether there is some foundation for both versions, the reader must draw his or her own conclusions.

The life of Alexander H. Stephens alluded to says that when Mr. Stephens was a teacher at Madison, Morgan County, Ga., in the fall 1832, he lost his heart. It says: "One little episode not noted here, or even stated by him until nearly forty years after this occurrence, we may briefly advert to. One of the pupils at this school was a young girl, lovely both in person and character, from whom the young teacher learned more than is to be found in the books, and whom he grew to love with a depth of affection all the greater that it was condemned to hopelessness and silence. The student with no prospect of worldly advancement, the invalid, who looked forward to an early death, must not think of marrying—must not speak of love. And he never spoke of it to her nor to any until a generation had passed, and then to but one friend."

The other version of Mr. Stephens' early love is located in Savannah, which he visited in the fall of 1834, and the authority of the story is Mrs. Caroline Regina Maria Smith, a lineal descendant of Lord Richard Percival Bland. Mrs. Smith says that when Mr. Stephens was in Savannah he met herself, then the wife of Edward Thomas Courtenay, her unmarried sister, Belle, and their father in this city, and after the meeting Mr. Stephens asked permission to pay his addresses to Mr. Bland's daughter. Mr. Bland, father of the then Mrs. Courtenay, on his return home related to his daughter Belle what Mr. Stephens had said, and she very pettishly said that she would not receive Mr. Stephens for a suitor, whereupon Mr. Courtenay spoke up and said: "I think my wife is the younger looking and the most handsome, and I would not be surprised if Mr. Stephens fell in love with my wife instead of you, Belle." The father of the ladies, patting his married daughter on the shoulder in an affectionate way, said: "I would not be surprised if Courtenay isn't right; I shall see Mr. Stephens and bring him around to tea this evening, and then we will find out."

Later in the afternoon Mr. Bland met Mr. Stephens in the office of Mr. McLaws and asked him to which of the ladies he referred, and Mr. Stephens in reply described the personal appearance of Mrs. Courtenay, and remarked that she was the only lady that he had ever met and loved at first sight; to which confession Mr. Bland made reply that the lady in question had been married. Mr. Stephens rejoined that he did not care if she had been married; that he desired to renew his request to pay his addresses to her, and then Mr. Bland finding young Stephens was ignorant of the fact that Mr. Courtenay was living, said: "My daughter's husband is living, and you see how vain your request is." A shade of pain passed over the face of Mr. Stephens, and the invitation to tea was, of course declined.

Many years afterward, when Mr. Stephens occupied an eminent position in Congress, a group of ladies in this city were discussing, in the presence of Mrs. Smith, the question as to why Mr. Stephens had never married, and a Mrs. Patterson spoke up and said that the reason Mr. Stephens had never married was because he had loved some lady he was not privileged to ask for love in return, and the subject was too sacred for him to disclose the name of the lady. Mrs. Smith says she could then have revealed the secret, but did not, and it is now given to the press for the first time.

The lady alluded to above was a vivacious South Carolina belle, and was educated at Elizabethtown, N. J., and carried off the honors of her class. Returning, she was married in this city in the spring of 1824. Her father resided the greater part of the time on his plantation at Woodlawn, eight miles from Bluffton. Miss Bland was a schoolmate of Julia Palmer, who married King Philip of France, and the graceful dancing of Miss Bland attracted the attention of the then heir apparent, who requested his fiancee to introduce him to the lady whom he observed picking up a bouquet from the floor and replacing it on her bosom as she went through the evolutions of the dance. Mrs. Smith recalls the reminiscences of dancing with the royal gentleman of France with apparent pleasure.—*Savannah News.*

The breaking out of the influenza in Iceland has caused considerable panic, as the consequences of the disease there have been serious. Of the 57,000 inhabitants in 1843, 2,000 died of the influenza, and in 1876 1,500 persons were carried off by the disease.

SEAMEN GUNNERS.

HOW THEY ARE TRAINED FOR THE UNITED STATES NAVY.

The Course of Instruction at the Newport (R. I.) Torpedo School—The Submarine Diving Class—Gunnery Practice.

A seaman gunner is a seaman of the United States navy who has successfully passed the examination required by the Navy Department and has received a year's course of instruction, embracing six months at the Torpedo Station, Newport, R. I., and six months at the Navy Yard, Washington.

The gunnery class, as it is called, is principally for the instruction of ex-apprentices of the navy, but seamen under 32 years of age who have honorable discharges, and who can pass a satisfactory examination in arithmetic, compositiou, orthography, seamanship and gunnery, are also eligible.

The course at the Torpedo Station consists of the study of electricity as applied to incandescent lighting, batteries, etc.; the manufacture and handling of explosives, such as gun cotton, dynamite, nitro-glycerine, fulminate of mercury, etc.; torpedoes, their manufacture, use and handling, and submarine diving.

The torpedo station is a long, irregular shaped island, situated in Newport Harbor and used by the government for the manufacture and testing of torpedoes and explosives. It is on this island that the seamen are stationed, having a cottage furnished them with accommodations for about twenty-five men. There are about two hundred and fifty incandescent lights on the island. The dynamo room, which is supplied with the leading dynamos of different electricians—Edison, Gramme, Weston, etc.—furnishes the entire place with light every night.

The seamen are thoroughly instructed in the installation and care of the plant and the different wirings for various currents, each man standing four hours' watch two or three times a week, during which time he has entire charge of the plant. The running of the engine and dynamo and the switching on and off of the different currents are all left entirely to his control. An expert electrician, stationed on the island by the government, exercises general supervision of all electrical apparatus connected with the station, and instructs the men in their use, especial care being taken with batteries, etc., that are used on shipboard.

During their leisure hours the men study the construction of the different classes of dynamos and the wiring of plants, and with occasional lectures from the instructor and the use of the books at the station pertaining to the subject they acquire a quantity of useful knowledge. It is a common sight of an evening to see the men sitting around their mess tables pondering the mysteries of science as expounded by the volumes of English, French and American electricians. All take interest in the study. Indeed, it becomes imperative, as an examination at the end of the six months on the station shows their proficiency in this as well as in other subjects.

One building on the island is completely furnished with the different utensils for the manufacture of gun cotton. Here let me say, for the benefit of the uninitiated, that gun-cotton, although four times more powerful in effect than gunpowder, is much less dangerous, as, except in rare cases, it cannot be exploded except by detonation. For instance, you could throw a block of gun cotton on a blazing fire and it would merely burn up with a quick, bright heat; but the same block exploded by detonation would completely wreck the building around it. The instructions concerning this explosive relate to its chemical formula and the different processes it goes through during manufacture, and its care and use in the service.

The submarine diving instructions are given daily. Six men are in a class at one time, and the course usually lasts about three weeks. During that time each man goes down at least once a day, staying under water from fifteen minutes to an hour. The first dive is taken in from one to two fathoms of water, and when the diver is used to the pressure the depth is increased, the men finishing at from twelve to fifteen fathoms, or sixty to ninety feet, which is generally deep enough to satisfy all ambitions. Nearly all make divers—good, bad and indifferent, depending greatly on the physical qualifications of the man himself. Probably one man out of ten will refuse altogether to don the suit, generally from timidity. The course is very thorough, the men working in pairs. Two men dress each other while two others revolve the pump, and vice versa.

The diving is very useful, as occasions often arise on shipboard which render imperative the services of an experienced diver. At sea, when on general service, the government allows the diver $1 per hour for all work done under water.

The torpedo instructions are very interesting, although somewhat complicated, and embrace the wiring from the electrical machines to the torpedo, the formation of the different appliances for testing, firing, etc., the management of the different switches used in the circuits and the rigging of ships and boats in readiness for an attack.

The above description gives a correct outline of the seaman's course of instruction at the torpedo station, and his time is very profitably employed. He is then examined in all the different branches he has studied, and if